IN THE SPECIFICATION:

On page 2, please amend paragraphs **[0007]** and **[0008]** as follows:

[0007] Figure 3 is a perspective view of yet another embodiment of the present invention; and

[0008] Figure 4 is a perspective view of yet another embodiment of the present invention;.

On pages 2-3, please amend paragraph **[0009]** as follows:

[0009] The device or curved dilator **100** creates ~~and~~ a step or gradually dilates an opening in body tissue. In the preferred embodiment, the device **100** creates and step dilates an opening in the interspinous ligament. Referring to Figure 1, the device **100** has an elongated body **102**, a handle **104** and a tapered curved tip **106**. The elongated body **102**, including the tapered curved tip **106**, is manufactured out of material such as, but not limited to, titanium-6A1-4V EL1 alloy which conforms to ASTM Standard F136-96; Standard Specification Wrought Titanium 6 Aluminum 4 ~~Vandium~~ Vanadium ELI (Extra Low Interstitial) Alloy (R56401) for surgical implant applications.

On pages 4 and 5, please amend paragraph **[0013]** as follows:

[0013] A physician can insert the first end **110** of first device **100** into the interspinous ligament to create an opening. By urging the curved tip **106** further into the interspinous ligament, up to the second end **108**, the opening is dilated to three millimeters. Generally, an implant device has a spacer with a diameter larger than three millimeters, and thus the physician will remove the first device **100** from the opening and select a second device **200**. As the opening is at three millimeters, the physician should select a second device **200** where the first end **210** has a diameter of three millimeters and a second end **208** having a diameter of six millimeters. By inserting the second device **200** into the opening, the larger diameter curved

tip **206** will further dilate the opening. This process should continue until the diameter of the opening is substantially the same as the diameter of the device to be implanted within the ~~patent~~ patient. The diameter of the opening is the diameter of the curved tip **206**.

On pages 5-6, please amend paragraph **[0015]** as follows:

[0015] Accordingly, the invention of the device can be used for an inventive method of dilation. The method includes making an incision in the patient and inserting the curved tip **106** of the tool preferably perpendicular to the back in a direction from a posterior position to an anterior position. The ~~tip**106**~~ tip **106** is then preferably inserted perpendicularly until it comes into the region above the interspinous ligament that is to be dilated. At that point, the tip **106** is substantially parallel to the ligament that is to be dilated. The handle of the device **100** would then be rotated and/or pivoted as the tip **106** is then urged into the interspinous ligament up to the second end **108**. The device **100** can then be removed. Should further dilation be required, subsequent devices **100** with larger curved tips can be used.